Community Council Meeting Summary, Sept. 20, 2023

Recording of meeting: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xa794PEtxvk

Attendance: 10 of 13 members attended

Agenda objectives:

1. Review past meeting progress and staff's summer work prepping Community Engagement
2. Orient Council to PCL draft timeline and major steps for funding process
3. Discuss and provide input on future PCL grant application

Staff and Council welcomed 2 new Council members. Staff reviewed group agreements and values.

Staff reviewed Council's work in May 2023, including Council's recommendations for goals, priority topics, and priority communities for PCL's Community Engagement process. PCL's Allocation Committee adopted the recommendations in June 2023. During summer 2023 staff used Council's recommendations to solicit and select consultants who will plan and implement PCL's community engagement process starting fall 2023- winter 2024. Staff will bring a final version of the community engagement plan to Council during fall 2023. In addition, staff reminded Council that during spring 2024, PCL staff will facilitate Council to use the results from community engagement to shape PCL's future funding priorities.

Staff also reviewed the overall funding process timeline for fall 2023- July 1, 2025. Staff explained the 3 major steps to the funding process- application, review, and recommendations. Staff described how during the next several Council meetings they will advise the design of those steps. For each step, Council will spend 2-3 meetings focusing on the key issues to advise, starting with the application during its September 2023 meeting. Staff presented a goal of trying to simplify PCL's grant application based on past feedback and on staff/Council values. Council worked in small/large group to discuss 2 key application design questions. The questions and notes from the discussion are on page 2-3 of this summary.

Council's next meeting is Nov. 17, 9:30 a.m. – noon. Agenda will include continuing to design the application and introducing design considerations for the grant review process.

What are the most important qualities of an organization that should receive PCL grants? Why?

1. Mission statement
2. Is mission statement actionable? Does the community agree that the organization has the qualities we're looking for?
3. Is staff and community they are serving representative of mission? Do their values align with PCL values and with community serving? What evidence/information do they offer to back this up?
4. Do they have data to back up their work? Is there evaluation or self evaluation process? Balance that against the fact that under-resourced communities often lack data and capacity to gather/report it. (Esp. small orgs, grassroots, and distrust among folx of color for data b/c historical abuse, misuse, and bias)
5. Seeks feedback, and shows they can grow from feedback. How do they course correct? How do they adapt and ensure improving model?
6. Fiscal responsibility

Policy issue:

- Don't force orgs to have low overhead as the only element of fiscal responsibility – balance organizational needs

What important information is needed about the program (services) an applicant wants funded to decide whether to fund it?

1. Understanding who will be served.
2. Need for the project in general (will provide xyz to this many families) demonstrated through narrative and quantitative (number of people served etc.) How did you come to understand the community needs these services?
3. What is overall program plan? What does program look like? Plan for outreaching to the community? What is staffing plan/caseload and how does that connect to the budget?
4. Why these services? What informed the choice to do those services? Experience, capacity of the org to serve the focus populations? Is this an expansion of current work/or continuing work in progress? Is it new work?

5. Creating equitable outcomes: what does success look like? What impact is the program having – how do clients understand impact? How do you engage with clients to understand whether your services have the impact that you think they're going to have? Evaluation plan to reach out to people in community about service delivery overall?
6. Demonstrate how program is culturally specific, responsive or relevant; prioritize groups that are doing work for specific communities
7. Sense of fiscal responsibility: budget for project, org budget*

Application mechanics issues: these are about "how" to obtain information

A. Space in application to provide narrative and qualitative info about the program. Less technical info required
B. Other ways to provide qualitative information (e.g. interviews in Small Grants Fund process)
C. Making application user friendly; use checklists; don't ask them to do budgets specifically for grant, could use budget from previous year; provide technical assistance to prepare budgets

Other Policy questions about applicant eligibility/prioritizing applicants:

- ongoing funding- can grant go to existing, ongoing service or only for new (even if org already getting funds)
- prioritize applicants who work with a community that has not been served? Yes but make sure we consider level of need in different communities.

Council feedback on meeting organization/logistics/facilitation

- More time in small groups, start on-time
- Liked questions in advance
- Like the timeline in pictures – helps to know what's ahead
- State name when speaking b/c hard to know who is talking when appearing virtually